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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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REPORT

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(Laws and activities in the handling of returnees to Poland and discussion of such activities)

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report on Polish repatriation from the USSR. It contains comments on the various laws that govern and affect repatriation, and discusses the actual handling of returnees from the USSR. There is also mention of the various receiving centers in Poland and the actual processing of the returnees.

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REPATRIATION

(Chapter V of Section 7.2 "Social Welfare" according to the "Political and Economic Yearbook for 1958" now being prepared by the "Polish Economic Publications" in Warsaw, Ul Poznanska 15.)

1. Legal Principles for Repatriation

The turning point of the greatly intensified mass repatriation of the past period was the Polish-Soviet Declaration signed in Moscow in November 1956, Point V of which states as follows:

"The Delegations agreed upon the principles on the basis of which responsible organs in the Soviet Union will facilitate further repatriation of Poles who have families in Poland, and persons who, through no fault of their own, could not take advantage of the law of repatriation based on the Polish-Soviet agreement of 1945.

The Polish-Soviet Agreement signed on 25 March 1957 in Moscow "governing the time and course of further repatriation from the USSR of persons of Polish nationality" was responsible for the development of the [above] mentioned point of the Declaration.

In the practical implementation of this agreement, it is expected that the period for the return of Polish citizens from the Soviet Union will extend to 31 December 1958, and the monthly average of repatriates will be about 10,000. Furthermore, a quarter million Polish citizens are expected to return to Poland from the USSR in 1957 and 1958.

Simultaneously with the repatriation of Poles from the USSR, a systematic repatriation<sub>2</sub> of Poles from other countries is continuing. All repatriates regardless of the country from which they come are legally entitled to the same privileges.

2. Legal Principles for Care of Repatriates

Problems of repatriation were, at first, regulated by the Resolution of the Presidium of the Government of Polish Peoples Republic of September

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1955 on care of repatriates returning to Poland. This resolution was brought up to date on 12 April 1957 by Resolution of the Council of Ministers No 145 on assistance for repatriates. (Monitor Polski of 23 April 1957, No 32, Item 217).

This resolution creates the legal and organizational framework for repatriation, and partially also defines the resources which the state is to allot for the program of assistance to repatriates.

The stipulations of the two resolutions mentioned above are to be implemented by the Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government for Matters of Repatriation in Warsaw, the respective ministries mentioned in the resolutions, and the presidiums of the peoples councils in the wojewodztwos, independent cities, powiats, and rural gminas.

### 3. Executive Apparatus of the Repatriation Program

The implementation of the Polish-Soviet Agreement of 25 March 1957, on the part of Poland, is the responsibility of Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government for matters of Repatriation, headed by Mieczyslaw Popiel, Minister, <sup>which</sup> has been operating since the beginning of 1957 in the Polish Embassy in Moscow (Ul. Aleksieja Tolstoja 30). Estate matters of the repatriates from the Ukrainian SSR are handled by the Polish Consulate in Kijow.

In Poland, the executive apparatus for repatriation program is concentrated in the Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government for Repatriation Matters in Warsaw (Ul. Willowa), and its subordinate offices in the wojewodztwos and powiats, the ministries mentioned in the resolutions, and finally the respective divisions of the presidiums of peoples councils.

Deputy Minister Zygfryd Sznek is the Plenipotentiary of the Government for Repatriation Matters and Przystaszewski is Director of the office.


The Resolution of the Council of Ministers of 12 April 1957 provides that coordination at the highest level and responsibility for implementation

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is the responsibility of the Inter- Ministerial Commission composed of representatives of the following ministries: Transportation, Communal Economy, Labor and Social Welfare, Agriculture, Forestry and Lumber Industry, and Health, under the leadership of the Plenipotentiary of the Government for Repatriation Matters. Corresponding coordination commissions under the direction of the chairmen and deputy-chairmen of the presidiums of peoples councils will operate in the wojewodztwos and powiats. In addition to this, wojewodztwos and powiats will also have a Plenipotentiary for Repatriation Matters who will usually be the chairman or deputy chairman of the presidium of the peoples council.

Finally, under direct supervision of the Plenipotentiary of the Government, there are two border repatriation points in Biala Podlaska and Przemyśl; a repatriation point in Wlazowno near Warsaw; and 16 repatriation centers or so called transfer points in the western and northern wojewodztwos.

#### 4. Social Assistance for Repatriates

Because of the unexpectedly sudden increase of repatriation by the end of 1956, it became necessary to expand the activities of the administrative apparatus by a public assistance program. In December 1956 on the initiative of students in Warsaw, a Polish Committee for Assistance to Repatriates was formed in the Polish Red Cross in Warsaw,  Ul Mokotowa 14, headed by Minister Wladyslaw Biekowski as chairman. Soon after this, corresponding committees for public assistance were formed with the support of the network of Red Cross Offices in the majority of wojewodztwos, cities, powiats, gminas, and individual factories especially in the western territories.

The responsibility of these committees is, mainly, to create a proper atmosphere among the public at home to make it easier for the repatriates to adapt themselves to the new conditions and be absorbed into the life of the locality. The committees also organize special information and service centers at the railroad stations for arriving repatriates and collect and distribute gifts, mainly clothing to the neediest.

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5. Progress of the Repatriation Program to Date

According to calculations of the Main Statistical Office made on the basis of data of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, 8,523 repatriates returned to Poland in 1955; 33,240, in 1956; and 95,275, in 1957. Repatriates from the USSR numbered 93,872 or 98.5 percent of the total number.

No final data is available on the social-professional-national composition of the repatriates groups. From the fragmentary data collected by the Plenipotentiary of the Government, it seems that, of the total number of repatriates returned in 1957, 31.4 percent were

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children under 16 years of age (in 1956 - 25 percent). Among the repatriates above 16, 10.3 percent were laborers; 14.9 percent, farmers; 16.1 percent, craftsmen; 7 percent, working intellectuals; ~~and~~ 10.3 <sup>percent,</sup> other professions; and 41.4 percent were repatriates with no profession.

The percentage of repatriates with no profession or rather no stipulated profession is striking. The majority of these are no doubt farmers who hesitate to settle again in the village, on the farm. This also explains the phenomenon that of the 140,000 persons repatriated during the period under discussion, only about 40 percent have settled in the village, the remainder is endeavoring to stay in the city.

The great majority, that is about 80 percent of the total number, have settled in the Western Territories and most of these, about 25,000 or 28 percent, in the City of Wroclaw and Wroclaw Wojewodztwo, then, in other wojewodztwos, in the following order: Olsztyn, Zielona Gora, Szczecin, Koszalin, Gdansk, Katowice, and finally Opole where, so far, only 3 percent of the newly arrived repatriates have settled.

An average of 60 percent of the repatriates go directly from the border points in Biala Podlaska and Przemysl to their families, and only relatively few take advantage of the free months stay at one of the repatriations centers in the western and northern wojewodztwos.

In 1957, the number of repatriation points increased from 8 to 19, and their capacity from 1,500 to 7,300 places. The border points in Biala Podlaska and Przemysl and also in Wiazownia near Warsaw have a total of 2,000 places. In 1957, more than 4,000 persons used the remaining 16 repatriation centers in the Western Territories.

The distribution of repatriation points and increase in their capacity was dictated by the increase in the percentage of repatriates who had no relatives in Poland. This number grew systematically, increasing from 8 percent in 1956 to 46 percent in December 1957.

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The cost of <sup>one</sup> months stay at the point together with additional care and feeding is calculated at 20 zloty per person per day but is entirely free to the repatriate. The repatriates staying at the point are also assured of constant medical care.

#### 6. Emergency Assistance

At the border points, repatriates undergo a medical examination and receive a health card and a repatriation card. On the basis of these cards, a repatriate receives a subsidy of 300 zloty for himself and for each member of his family. Furthermore, he is entitled to free transportation for his possessions and free passage by rail for himself and his family from the border point <sup>to</sup> his destination, a location freely chosen by himself as his future place of settlement. In the beginning, the repatriation card serves as a card of identity and Polish citizenship.

To get himself established at the place of settlement, a repatriate may obtain assistance up to 2,000 zloty for himself and, as head of the family, and 500 zloty additional for each member of the family. Single persons may receive up to 1,000 zloty. In cases of dire need, the repatriate <sup>as</sup> may also receive clothing; in cases of sickness or death of any member of the family, he may request special aid through the social-administrative divisions in <sup>the</sup> respective presidiums of the peoples councils.

The remodeled government resolution on assistance to repatriates has greatly reduced and limited emergency assistance, shifting the weight of the repatriate program to making the repatriate productive, that is, assisting him in getting a new start in life and in his profession. In this connection, the role of public assistance which is mainly concentrated in emergency charitable assistance has increased correspondingly.

Many repatriates, especially rehabilitated persons returning from isolated areas, have no baggage or even adequate clothing. In such instances, the public gives emergency aid, making the distribution from gifts received for that purpose from Poles at home and abroad.

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The extent of this assistance can be judged from figures of gifts in kind and money received and distributed by the Polish Committee for Assistance to Repatriates in Warsaw and the network of corresponding social committees in the country.

According to incomplete data, these public committees received from the domestic collection in the first 6 months of their operations, 100,000 pieces of clothing and household goods and more than 18 million zloty in cash.

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7. Settlement of Repatriates in Western Territories

The Resolution of the Council of Ministers of 12 April 1957 which reduced state emergency free grants from 1,000 to 300 zloty per person, simultaneously allotted a relatively large sum, 850 million zloty, mainly for settling the repatriates in the Western Territories and assisting them to become productive.

This sum, however, is not to be handled by one disposition center but is to reach the repatriates through various forms of assistance

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and credits, distributed by several state agencies, and even labor or work cooperative organizations. At the same time, most of these activities will be carried out by the people's<sup>s</sup> councils.

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Part 4 of the Resolution directs the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry to reserve 3,000 individual farms, 7,500 places in State Farms, and 800 forest settlements for repatriates in 1957 and stipulates that buildings be completely renovated in advance.

The resolution also provides for a number of tax exemptions, provided also in the Resolution of the Government on Farm Settlement published on 25 March 1957 (Monitor Polski).

Thus the repatriate-settlers receive the farms for their own in accordance with the stipulations of the resolution. The owner is to receive a proper deed of ownership not later than one year after taking possession of the farm, provided that he has been operating the farm properly and that the loan be repaid. Payments are spread over a period of 25 years including the 3 to 5 years of tax exemption.

Long term loans are available to repatriates mainly for remodeling the farm buildings. They have priority also in purchasing building materials. In addition they are entitled to short and long-term bank credits for the purchase of livestock, household goods, artificial fertilizers, seed, etc.

Repatriates and their families are entitled to free health and medical care for the period of one year.

Settlements are handled by the presidiums of the people's councils who also issue settlers cards, entitling them to various privileges.

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As regards individual farms, the plan of farm settlement, in 1957, greatly exceeded the stipulated limits. The ministry of Agriculture settled 4,283 repatriate families on individual farms; while 1,500 places ~~available~~ <sup>unoccupied</sup> remained in state farms; and fewer still were settled in producer cooperatives.

8. Employment and Labor Mediation

The Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare Warsaw, ul. Szopena 1, handles the employment of repatriates on a national scale, otherwise local problems of employment and labor mediation are handled, as a rule, by independent divisions of employment offices in the powiat presidiums and local people's councils. In practice, the management and administration of the repatriation centers mediate here also. Unfortunately, the housing shortage impedes operations. Almost everywhere the story is the same; where employment is available there is no available housing. As a result, in actual practice, it takes a long time to find anything.

In principle, repatriates applying to employment organs ought to be handled with despatch.

Directive No 5 of the Minister of Labor and Social Welfare of 14 May 1957 (Par 2, point 2) provides that, should there be difficulty in finding employment for a repatriate immediately upon his application, he should be assigned another date not more than 14 days on which to call back to check on employment. Complaints in these matters should be submitted to the independent employment divisions in the presidiums of the wojewodztwo people's councils.

The best chances of employment exist in building, trades, mining, railroading, metal industry, health service, and schooling.

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In addition, the repatriate-craftsman is entitled to reduced rates in issuing craftsmen's permits, priority in obtaining space and raw materials, and exemption from turnover tax and income tax for the period of one year. Further information may be obtained from the trade division in the presidiums of powiat people's councils.

During nine months of 1957, a overall total of 877 newly organized crafts workshops and small industrial enterprises obtained loans. This number does not include all newly arrived craftsmen because the majority of them were employed in workshops already in existence, in cooperatives, or state enterprises.

A weak point in labor mediation is the fact that the repatriate does not receive employment according to his qualifications immediately upon his arrival at the border point, but, in many instances, goes where there is neither work or housing.

#### 9. Housing Difficulties

Undoubtedly, the lack of housing is the biggest difficulty in the repatriation program. Theoretically the problem is settled by the above mentioned resolution on assistance to repatriates but unfortunately it does not fully settle the problem and, in practice, even these stipulations are not carried out.

According to the resolution "The Minister of Communal Economy shall hand over as rapidly as possible the rooms, which had not been completed on 31 December 1956, and which have been assigned to repatriates in accordance with the distribution for 1956."

Point 3 of the Resolution adds that "it is the responsibility of the presidiums of people's councils to assigned to repatriates rooms which have been vacated by persons moving abroad permanently."

Finally, Point 1 stipulates that "the presidiums of the wojewodztwo people's councils will ensure the delivery to repatriates in 1957 of 10,500 rooms in cities from settlers (new) construction as well as from capital repairs."

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Unfortunately, in 1956, repatriates received only 2,500 rooms of the 4,000 which had been allotted to them. The situation in 1957 was not much better. Only a small percentage of rooms vacated by persons moving abroad permanently, belongs to the repatriate allotment and, in many instances, a house already formally allotted to them is "grabbed up" by someone else.

However, even if in accordance with the resolution, the Ministry of Communal Economy handed over for use all the rooms according to plan and the people's councils allocated them to the repatriates, it would not cover the requirements of about 60,000 repatriates who settled in cities in 1957 alone.

There are no vacant rooms anywhere and the demand is growing. Therefore many people look with hostility at the repatriate who is entitled to priority in housing.

#### 10. Welfare Allowances

A large percentage of repatriates consist of invalids, the aged, and youth of school age. All these categories substantially weight the state budget, more strictly speaking, the pension fund and the school budget.

A repatriate who has started working is entitled to employment continuity required for leave privileges, if he was employed before his return to Poland and obtains work within 3 months of his return, or even later, if the delay is beyond his control. He is entitled to family allowances from the first month of employment; he is also entitled to have the time worked abroad credited to the time required to obtain a specific position or salary, if his employment abroad was the same type as his present employment.

The repatriate is also entitled to credit towards his retirement or pension for the time worked abroad. He is also assured of invalid privileges provided for war or military invalids with credit for service rendered in the Polish or allied military units.

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Pensions allowed repatriates by foreign institutions, regardless of country, will be paid in Poland after proper recalculation.

Principles for obtaining pension allowances by repatriates are defined in the Ordinance of the Council of Ministers of 10 May 1957 (Dziennik Ustaw Polish Peoples Republic No 26 15 May 1957, Item 117). Furthermore information can be obtained from Pension and Social Welfare Inspectorates of the Powiat People's Councils Presidiums.

The Ordinance does not stipulate or define the type of pension and invalid provisions for persons coming from isolated areas and now being rehabilitated.

Whenever a repatriate does not have documentary proof of wages or salary paid him previously - usually persons coming from isolated areas - the minimum wage paid in Poland is usually taken as a basis, <sup>although it</sup> ~~and this~~ ~~pension~~ does not satisfy the most elementary needs of the invalid or aged repatriate.

The question of adjusting accounts for welfare allowances with countries in which the repatriate worked and became an invalid has also been left open.

As long as we are discussing other forms of welfare allowances, we must emphasize that the repatriates are assured free prophylactic and medical care during the period (three words illegible) after their return in the city, and, one year, in the village. This consists of medical care, dental care, medicines, first aid, and ambulance service.

Children of repatriates may, in certain instances, be placed in Homes for the Child, children's sanatoriums, and nurseries.

Finally, the youth returning to the country is assured ~~the possibility~~ <sup>ed</sup> ~~of starting or continuing their~~ schooling or is given priority for housing in boarding schools and academic homes.

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carried out and the immense difficulties which the fulfillment of both these programs entail demand the utmost effort, good will, and strength not only of the people in Poland but Poles abroad.



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